

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL OPORTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0838

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L OPORTO 0157

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, PO

SUBJECT: POLITICAL/MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. ELECTION ACTIVITIES: SOCIALIST RALLY APRIL 17 AT OPORTO'S CRYSTAL
PALACE HIGHLIGHTED WEEKEND POLITICAL EVENTS IN THE NORTH.
ENTHUSIASTIC
CROWD OF OVER 15,000 JAMMED PALACE ARENA AND SPILLED OUT INTO SURROUND

ING PARK . RALLY MARKED SHARPEST PS CRITICISM YET OF PPD AND CDS
CONDEMNED INTER-ALIA FOR BEING " CAPITALIST AND NEOFASCIST."
PARTICULAR SARCASM WAS DIRECTED AGAINST PPD SEC GEN SA CARNEIRO.
KEYNOTE
SPEAKER MARIO SOARES, HOWEVER, AVOIDED PERSONAL POLEMICS. HE
EMPHASIZED THAT SOCIALIST ELECTION VICTORY WAS ALREADY ASSURED WITH
ONLY A QUESTION OF " HOW MUCH." COMMENT: IMPRESSIVE TURNOUT
DEMONSTRATES CONTINUED URBAN SUPPORT AMONG WORKING CLASS FOR PS AND
SOARES. SLASHING ATTACKS ON PPD AND CDS BY LOCAL PS PARTY
HACKS ARE TO BE EXPECTED DURING FINAL WEEK OF CAMPAIGN
IN THE NORTH WHERE BOTH PARTIES REPRESENT PRINCIPAL COMPETITON TO
THE SOCIALISTS.

2. VELOSO PLANS U.S. VISIT: NORTHERN REGION MILITARY COMMANDER
BG VELOSO HOSTED PREVIOUSLY UNANNOUNCED GOOD FRIDAY
LUNCHEON APRIL 16 IN OPORTO SUBURB RESTAURANT FOR MILITARY CHIEFS
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OF STAFF EANES (ARMY), MORAIS DA SILVA (AIR FORCE) AND SOTTO CRUZ

(NAVY) AND FIRST REGION AIR FORCE COMMANDER PINHO FREIRE. LUNCHEON MEETING SPARKED CONSIDERABLE LOCAL PRESS SPECULATION. IN POST-LUNCHEON INTERVIEW WITH JOURNALIST, VELOSO DOWNPLAYED IMPORTANCE OF MEETING WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS JUST A " MEAL AMONG FRIENDS" VELOSO ALSO ANNOUNCED HE WAS CURRENTLY CONSIDERING A PLAN TO VISIT THE U.S. IN EARLY MAY AT THE INVITATION OF LUSO-AMERICAN COMMUNITY. THE TRIP, ACCORDING TO VELOSO, WOULD NOT BE AN OFFICIAL VISIT EVEN THOUGH HE MIGHT HAVE CONTACTS AT AN OFFICIAL LEVEL. COMMENT: VELOSO TOLD ME APRIL 14 HE HAD JUST RECEIVED SEVERAL TELEGRAMS FROM VARIOUS LUSO-AMERICAN SOCIETEIS INVITING HIM TO MAKE SPRING VISIT TO FOUR U.S. CITIES: NEWARK, HARTFORD, NEW BEDFORD, AND SAN DIEGO. A LOCAL RADIO/TV APPEARANCE WAS POSSIBLE IN HARTFORD. VELOSO WAS UNCERTAIN WHETHER TO ACCEPT AND SAID HE WOULD CONTACT THIS WEEK TO DISCUSS INVITATIONS IN DEPTH. HIS APRIL 16 MEETING WITH MILITARY " FRIENDS" APPARENTLY DECIDED THE ISSUE. ACCORDING TO WELL-INFORMED JOURNALIST, OTHER ISSUES DISCUSSED AT MEETING INCLUDED REFUGEE PROBLEMS, RESTRUCTURING THE ARMED FORCES AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN WHICH VELOSO HAS ASPIRATIONS AND IS POSSIBLE COMPROMISE CANDIDATE. PENNER

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